



# PVA for Entrepreneurship

## 2024 - 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW



JOHNS HOPKINS  
TECHNOLOGY VENTURES

Pava Marie LaPere Center  
for Entrepreneurship



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>INNOVATION &amp; ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>STAFF</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>PRESIDENT'S VENTURE FELLOWSHIP</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>FAST FACTS</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>ALUMNI</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>2025 EOY TEAMS</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL SUPPORT</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PROGRAMMING</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>MD STUDENT VENTURE SHOWCASE</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>KINDLING PRE-ACCELERATOR</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>ECOSYSTEM CONNECTIONS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>SPARK ACCELERATOR</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>FIVE-YEAR RECAP</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>FUEL ACCELERATOR</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>DONOR APPRECIATION</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB ACCELERATOR</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>CONTACT &amp; FOLLOW</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>SUMMER INCUBATOR</b>	<b>17</b>		



# WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR



**JOSH AMBROSE**  
Director

## *Return on investment.*

It's something our founders are thinking about and a key focus for every investor—especially in times of uncertainty.

Since opening in 2018, the Pava Center is proud of the good work we've invested in:

- Engaged with over 1,300 teams from across campus
- Thousands of students and community members reached
- Facilitating \$2.9 million in grant funding for founders, leading to over \$300 million in external grants and venture, and millions more realized in revenue

Our strategy is rooted in supporting “everyone from the curious to the committed.” We're excited for our hires this year that are helping us expand those opportunities for both early and later-stage teams.

The greater Baltimore ecosystem and our dedicated alumni remain the “secret sauce” to all that we do. We're grateful for the hundreds of individuals who have offered connections, mentorship, speaking, judging, and philanthropic support. The success of the center is truly your success, as we build the ecosystem of collaboration that our friend and namesake, Pava LaPere, helped champion so ardently.

Throughout all of this, our most consistent, top-level priority? We invest our time and energy into founders. Their journeys may not always fit neatly into bullet points or charts, but their stories guide our every decision. They discover, build, and sell the work of tomorrow.

Ideating and pivoting alongside them is a privilege. We invite you to continue to join in this good work!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J Ambrose".

Josh Ambrose and the Pava Center team

# STAFF



**JOSH  
AMBROSE**  
Director



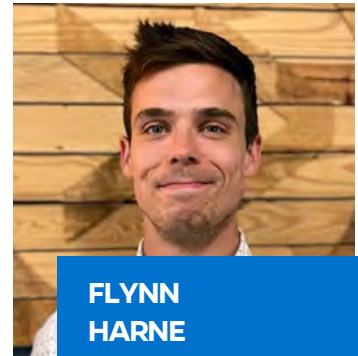
**ANTHONY  
WATTERS**  
Social Innovation  
Lab Director



**DEJA  
ROBINSON**  
Student Program  
Administrator



**ELENA  
DEBOLD**  
Communications  
Specialist



**FLYNN  
HARNE**  
Sr. Administrative  
Coordinator



**JAKE  
DREIER**  
Assistant Director



**PAUL  
DAVIDSON**  
Associate Director

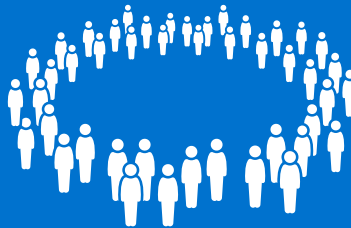
**This year, the Pava Center added three new team members:  
Flynn Harne, Deja Robinson, and Jake Dreier**

# FAST FACTS



**15,000+ VISITS**

from more than 3,000 people this year



**2,500+ PEOPLE**

Engaged in workshop, panels and other programming



**170 TEAMS**

Representing over 430 affiliates from 9 different schools and the greater Baltimore community



**~\$800K AWARDED**

The Pava Center awarded ~\$800K this year in non-dilutive grants



**250+ MENTORS**

across industries, all around the world, including both alumni and friends of the program



**WEEKLY EVENTS**

The Center hosts or cross-promotes events every week, when school is in session



**100+ EVENTS**

In addition to classes, the Pava Center has hosted over 100 events in our space



**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

pro bono services, IP guidance, regulatory support, and more



**7 FULL-TIME STAFF**

20 student workers

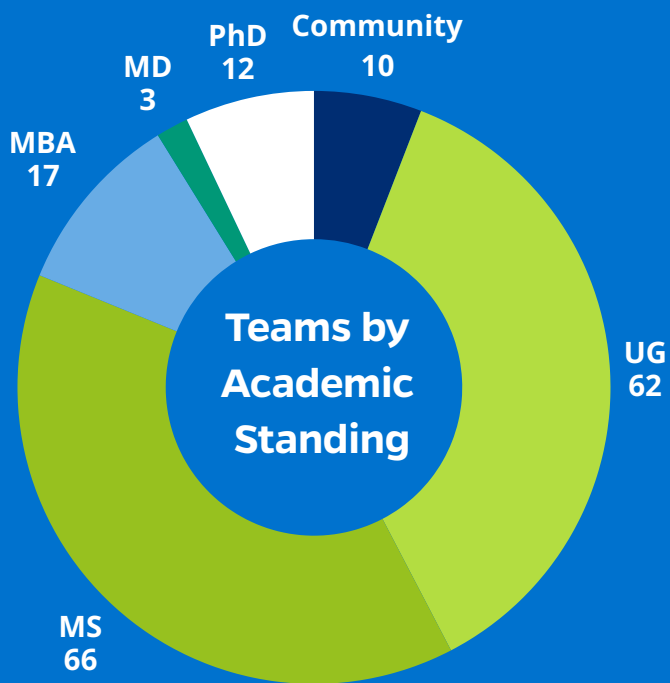
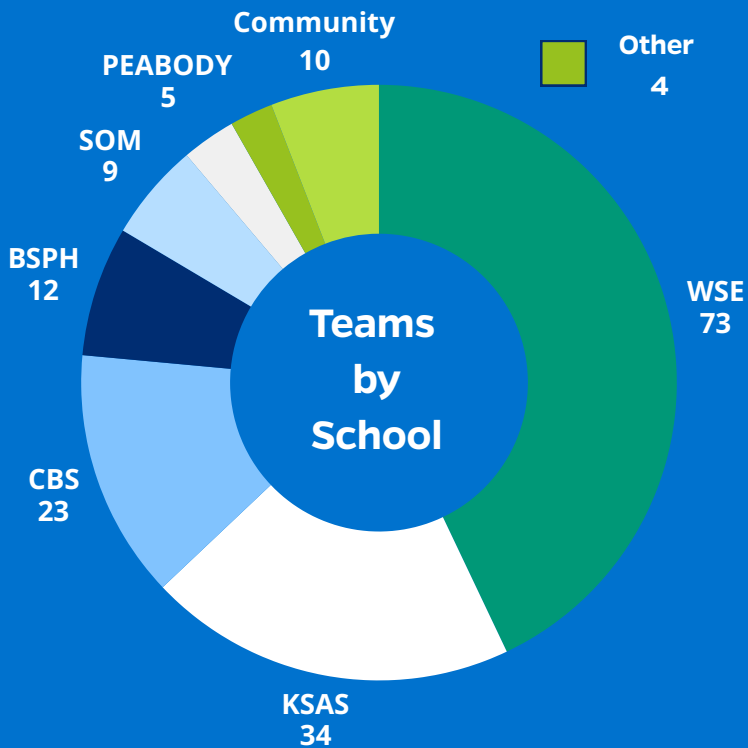
# \$300M+

Funding raised by  
venture teams  
since the Pava Center  
opened in fall 2018,  
with \$80M+ raised  
in the '24-'25 year





# 2025 EOY TEAMS





## CONTINUUM OF ENGAGEMENT

### *Early:*

- Workshops, open houses, class presentations, panels, and more
- Kindling: Pre-accelerator

### *Entry Level:*

- Spark: Early-stage accelerator
- Ignite Awards

### *Growth:*

- Fuel + Social Innovation Lab: Later-stage accelerators
- Summer Incubator: Follow on support

### *Advanced:*

- Innovation & Entrepreneurship Challenge and President's Venture Fellowship: advanced support
- Alumni Support

**“Fuel helped us pivot and guided us in developing our venture in its early stages. We are ecstatic for what comes next.”**

***-Abdelrahman Hamimi, Scheduling Wizard***



# PROGRAMMING CONT'D



**Thousands of students and community members engaged in workshops, event collaborations, orientations, hackathons, networking opportunities, panels, special events, and more**

## Highlights:

- Carey Business School Student Venture Showcase – All participating pitch teams came from the Pava Center, with winners receiving a total of \$33K in grant prizes
- Startup Founder Panel – How Startups Get Started featured founders Margaret Roth, Amanda Allen, Megan Huey, Arya Satish, Steve Iannelli, and Naomi Gordon, offering insights into early-stage entrepreneurship
- Computer Science Networking Night – In collaboration with the CS department, the Pava Center hosted a networking event featuring tech founders Nick Culbertson and Brandon Duderstadt
- HopStart Business Plan Competition – Partnered with the Center for Leadership Education to promote this annual pitch competition, supporting student-led ventures



# PROGRAMMING CONT'D

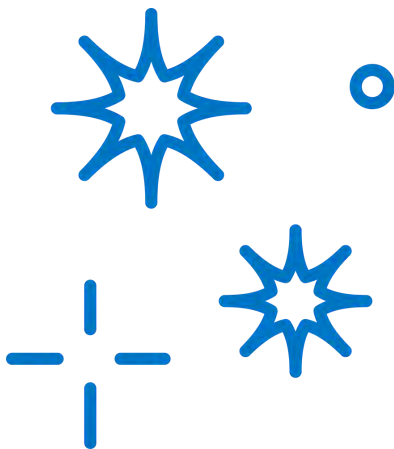


At the end of August, the Pava Center partnered with the Life Design Lab to co-host the orientation panel *Confidence Through Curiosity* for nearly 1,300 incoming first-year undergraduates



# KINDLING PRE-ACCELERATOR

“This has been such a fun, fulfilling process, and as a new international student, it made my Thursdays less lonely and so much more fun! I'm really grateful to all the wonderful people who made this possible for first-time builders!”



Kindling engaged 25 teams and over 80 students from KSAS, WSE, SOM, and BSPH. Students formed teams to identify major challenges, conduct market and stakeholder research, and explore product fit—all with a clear mandate to avoid pitching any solution!



# KINDLING PRE-ACCELERATOR CONT'D

**“Entrepreneurship is the  
cornerstone of this  
country... I have an  
emotional connection to  
the work being done at  
the Pava Center.”  
-Karthik Seshan**



Johns Hopkins alum Karthik Seshan has channeled his passion for innovation into meaningful support for the Pava Center since 2017, funding initiatives like the Summer Medtech Award and Kindling Accelerator.

Beyond financial backing, he mentors students and champions emotionally driven education, inspiring and equipping the next generation of changemakers.

# SPARK ACCELERATOR



Spark supported 83 student teams across fall and spring, with the spring cohort piloting a successful hybrid format featuring weekly in-person sessions at the Pava Center that benefited both teams and Strategic Advisor interns.



“This was a really good program for first-time builders! I learned a lot from it, building on my experiences with the Center for Leadership Education. I got the wide variety of startup topics I was looking for.”

# FUEL ACCELERATOR



**“I don’t know where  
we would be now  
without the  
Pava Center.”  
-Iralde Sicilia , B9**



## **Fall: 10 teams**

- **1 BSPH**
- **2 KSAS**
- **1 Peabody**
- **2 SOM**
- **4 WSE**

## **Spring: 12 teams**

- **5 WSE**
- **2 KSAS**
- **4 CBS**
- **1 BSPH**

**Fall and spring’s Demo Days saw record  
attendance, with each having over 150 visitors**



# SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB ACCELERATOR



Showcase winner, Prepare Parol, went on to raise nearly \$200k in the two months after the showcase

“Being a part of a group where everyone is looking to make a social change is special and is really hard to find in accelerators. Being in the cohort has helped me solidify that I’m in this for the social impact, not just for revenue.”  
-Adi Kondepudi, Eloquia



# SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB CONT'D

- A record 15 teams were supported
- Over 1,000 unique community members have been served by SIL teams since the accelerator's fall start
- \$250k raised by current cohort during accelerator (not including SIL funding)
- Eight joint projects launched between SIL cohort members and alumni
- Green Mechanics BLLC participated in a city/state-wide initiative and led a project focused on the Chesapeake Bay
- 33% of the teams were 501c-3 Non-profit organizations and 66% of the teams were LLCs
- 93% of the teams were led by women or founders of color



**“SIL snapped me into shape to realize that this is not only a business, but an impactful one. I learned you need to run it that way so you can impact more people.”**

***-Kiara Scott, Money Meister***

# SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB CONT'D

**“SIL did a really good job of bringing a good community of folks together. Folks intentionally went out of their way to ask/show how they can be of value to each other, in a way that gave a unique feeling of family.”**

***-Larry Davis,  
Green Mechanics BLLC***



- Piloted the first SIL Alumni Mixer, connecting graduates from five cohorts to strengthen cross-cohort relationships
- Hosted the Annual Impact Bootcamp, a free event focused on asset mapping and policy engagement for mission-driven organizations
- Supported community activation through events like the Bmore Heart Healthy Fest, led by SIL participant Joyson Balisimore
- Launched the inaugural Baltimore Impact Networking Night, bringing together students from five universities and 14 SIL ventures to foster collaboration across institutions



# SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB CONT'D



## SIL ALUM WINS

- B-360 (SIL '17) Youth STEM Center's grand opening and founder, Brittany was also recognized as one of the 2025 Most Influential by Afro Magazine
- CLLCIVLY (SIL '19) hosted a 24-hour crowdfunding campaign and 10 SIL alumni teams raised \$119k
- Intelhealth (SIL '17) launched with a \$1K SIL grant, has raised \$6M in under five years and now operates with an annual budget of \$3M. With 85 team members, the organization serves 10 million patients annually across India, Indonesia, and Kyrgyzstan through a network of over 9,000 doctors
- JJIM (SIL '24) has opened a manufacturing lab in Hampden
- Next Gen Language Access (SIL '23) expanded to four Baltimore City high schools and two Ohio school districts. NGLA-trained interpreters were featured at a Baltimore City Schools CEO event and a Mayor's Office gathering
- Parity Homes (SIL '20) was funded through Governor Moore's Baltimore Vacants Reinvestment Initiative
- Phase 3 Training Corporation (SIL '23) has scaled across two states
- RICH Juice Bar (SIL '21) opened its second location at Harbor Place
- R.I.S.E. Arts and founder Kammeron Giggers (SIL '23) was highlighted in the Forbes
- Sweet Bee Services (SIL '24) achieved Medicaid approval for its doula training program, partnered with MedStar Harbor Hospital, and founder Leah Hairston joined the advisory board and research team at Morgan State University's Center for Maternal and Family Health

# SUMMER INCUBATOR



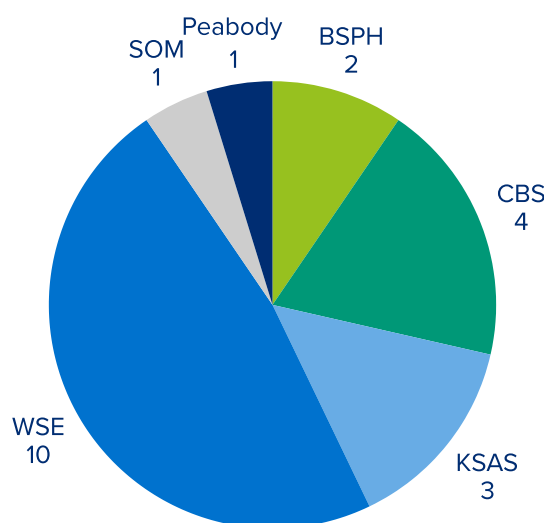
“I would like to thank you for meeting with me today and introducing me to all those great opportunities and valuable advice. I think I found somewhere I belong.”  
*-Jinlong Lin, incoming grad student*

**21**

Teams

**6**

Different  
Schools



Student  
Standing:

**7 UG**

**8 Masters**

**3 MBA**

**3 PhD**

# SUMMER INCUBATOR CONT'D

**“I look forward to coming back to the Pava Center for guidance from the amazing mentors!”**

## ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Connected with alumni at the Johns Hopkins DC Campus and welcomed Towson’s StarTUP team to the Pava Center
- Joined UMBC student entrepreneurs for a visit to UMD’s Dingman-Lamone Center for Entrepreneurship
- Explored Baltimore’s enterprise history at the Museum of Industry and networked with PwC leaders in Baltimore
- Hosted the Beyond Silicon Valley: Business of Climate Innovation conference in partnership with Revolution Rise of the Rest
- Featured 20+ guest speakers sharing insights across AI, law, finance, and more





# INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE



**“Arts students are often overlooked in entrepreneurial spaces, but in truth, every successful artist is also an entrepreneur. We’re excited to highlight the power of bringing together music, artificial intelligence, and user-centered design, creating something original.”**

**- Crystal Jiang, KaraOrchee**

This streamlined funding program supported 22 teams from the ‘24 and ‘25 cohorts, offering co-working space and mentorship, along with the President’s Venture Fellows. These teams represent some of the most advanced student ventures, such as alum team Visilant, which recently received \$1.5M from Google.org.

# PRESIDENT'S VENTURE FELLOWSHIP

All teams in the program are Baltimore-based, meeting weekly with staff advisors and participating in monthly cohort sessions alongside I&E grant recipients. Each team is also paired with external mentors to support venture growth.

## '24-'25 WINNERS



### FETAL THERAPIES TECHNOLOGIES

Led by Selena Shirkin and Eric McAlexander, this team originally launched as an undergraduate project and is developing a novel port system optimized for fetal therapy surgeries.

**“Early-stage student ideas can grow into ventures with real clinical and commercial potential. This fellowship affirms our belief that with the right support, student-led innovation can change the future of healthcare.”**

**-Selena Shirkin**



### MODELUS

Led by Prem Umang Satyavolu and Mantej Singh, this team is developing an AI platform that accelerates pharmaceutical lead optimization.

**“I kept hearing complaints about variability and inefficiencies in early-stage testing. Johns Hopkins gave me both the technical foundation and the entrepreneurial ecosystem to take that question seriously... it was the right environment to turn an idea into something tangible.”**

**-Prem Umang**

# PRESIDENT'S VENTURE FELLOWSHIP CONT'D

## '23-'24 WINNERS UPDATES



The team is gaining strong networking traction, securing new leads, progressing toward closing their seed round, and completing a national fellowship.



The team made major technical strides and secured a \$4M seed round, supported by key introductions from the Pava Center and JHTV.

**"The growing entrepreneurship ecosystem at Hopkins and in Baltimore as a whole has been extremely helpful, both in terms of connections for the company, as well as providing a supportive community."**

***-Mitchell Turley, Somnair***



# PRESIDENT'S VENTURE FELLOWSHIP CONT'D

## '22-'23 WINNERS UPDATES



**APTABRIDGE**

The team continues active lab work while exploring new research partnerships within Johns Hopkins and with collaborators at other institutions.



**CURVE ASSURE**

Fundraising is underway with several angel investors and investment groups in the pipeline. The team has completed hundreds of assessments, entered an agreement with a spine surgeon research group, and is in discussions with major national studies to integrate their platform.

# ALUMNI

We continue to engage weekly with new and returning alumni for advising, network building, and venture support, averaging over a dozen inbound connections each month. Alumni are welcomed to all demo days, showcases, and workshops. This year, we collaborated with Development and Alumni Relations colleagues to host Founders Forums in NYC, Baltimore, and virtually; welcomed Leadership Fellows to the Pava Center in December; and held an Open House during Alumni Weekend in April.



**“The accelerator’s experience let me build early traction quickly and gave weight to my claim of pursuing entrepreneurship seriously. When my first team parted ways, I learned a crucial lesson, ship or die.**

**Today we’ve raised \$1 M towards our seed round to bring effortless, AI-powered financial intelligence to startups and SMBs. My experiences are proof that accelerator lessons endure well beyond campus.”**

***-Will Diaz, WSE ‘24, CoFina.ai***



# ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

**Pro-bono, office hours provided, but were not limited to:**

- Scale LLP
- Mind over Machines
- Sheridan Libraries
- KBF CPA
- Microsoft
- JHTV
- Founders Approach
- Slate Seven

## **JHTV collaborations:**

- President's Venture Fellowship teams are supported by JHTV's Venture Mentorship Program
- New workshop series with alumni and recently exited founder Nick Culbertson
- Participation in February Angel Investor Breakfast, with over 50 ecosystem members in attendance



**“Start with a problem you can’t stop thinking about. Build from lived experience, and don’t be afraid to take risks, especially if your idea challenges the status quo. Surround yourself with brilliant people who you can learn from and will push you to make hard decisions.”**

***-Antonella Sturniolo, Upsilon***



# MD STUDENT VENTURE SHOWCASE



**After three years of collaboration, the Pava Center and partners—including TEDCO, Upsurge, and nearly 20 schools—successfully launched the Maryland Student Showcase. Backed by the governor’s budget, this statewide initiative elevates student entrepreneurship.**

Over 400 in attendance, including:

- Abi Kulshreshtha, Executive Director, Maryland Innovation Initiative, TEDCO
- Francesca Ioffreda, Chief Innovation Officer, State of Maryland, Office of Governor Wes Moore
- Frank LaPere, Pava LaPere's father
- Markus Proctor, Executive Director, Innovators of Progress

\$450k in awards were made, including:

- \$50k each for Somnair and Fetal Therapy Technologies
- Audience Impact Choice Award for Jay’s Watermelonade



# ECOSYSTEM CONNECTIONS

- Carey Venture Showcase: co-curated by the Pava Center and profiling VC investor judges. Pava Center teams NervMyo and CounselAI both won awards
- Supported our friends at Center for Leadership Education with their HopStart pitch competition, where the majority of teams were already engaged in Pava Center programming
- Pava Center student teams pitched and win significant prizes at competitions across the country, including Rice, Baylor, and Stu Clark
- Maryland Student Startup Networking Dinner: Co-hosted with support from Upsurge Baltimore, Venture 4 Them, USM, & Innovators of Progress. Over 60 students in attendance from over 10 schools
- Ran a workshop at the Hopkins Healthcare Business Conference
- Staff attended the Global Consortium of Entrepreneurship Centers annual conference, held this year at Babson College. At the event, Paul served on a panel with UB, Loyola, MICA, and EcoMap about “Catalyzing Baltimore’s Innovation Ecosystem: Generative AI and its Impact on Business and Education”

## VIRTUAL ECOSYSTEM ENGAGEMENT

### ■ Monthly Mailing List

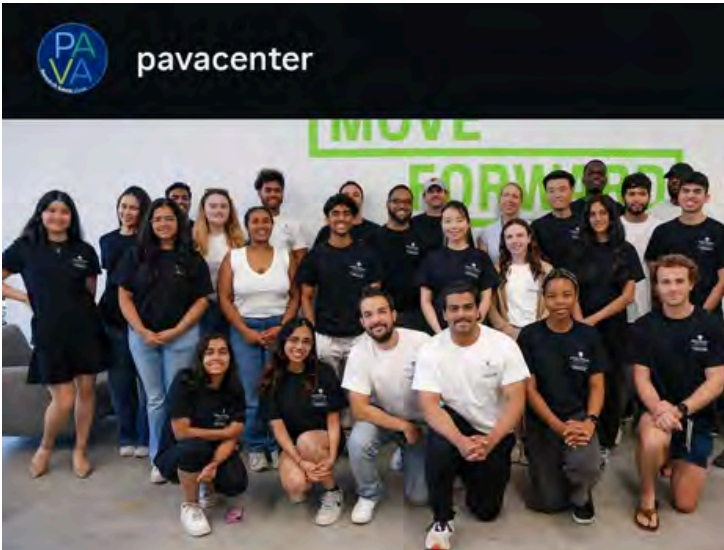
Mailing List	<b>10K</b>
Open rate	<b>30%</b>

### ■ Social Media

Total Followers	<b>4K</b>
Impressions	<b>240K</b>

### ■ Website

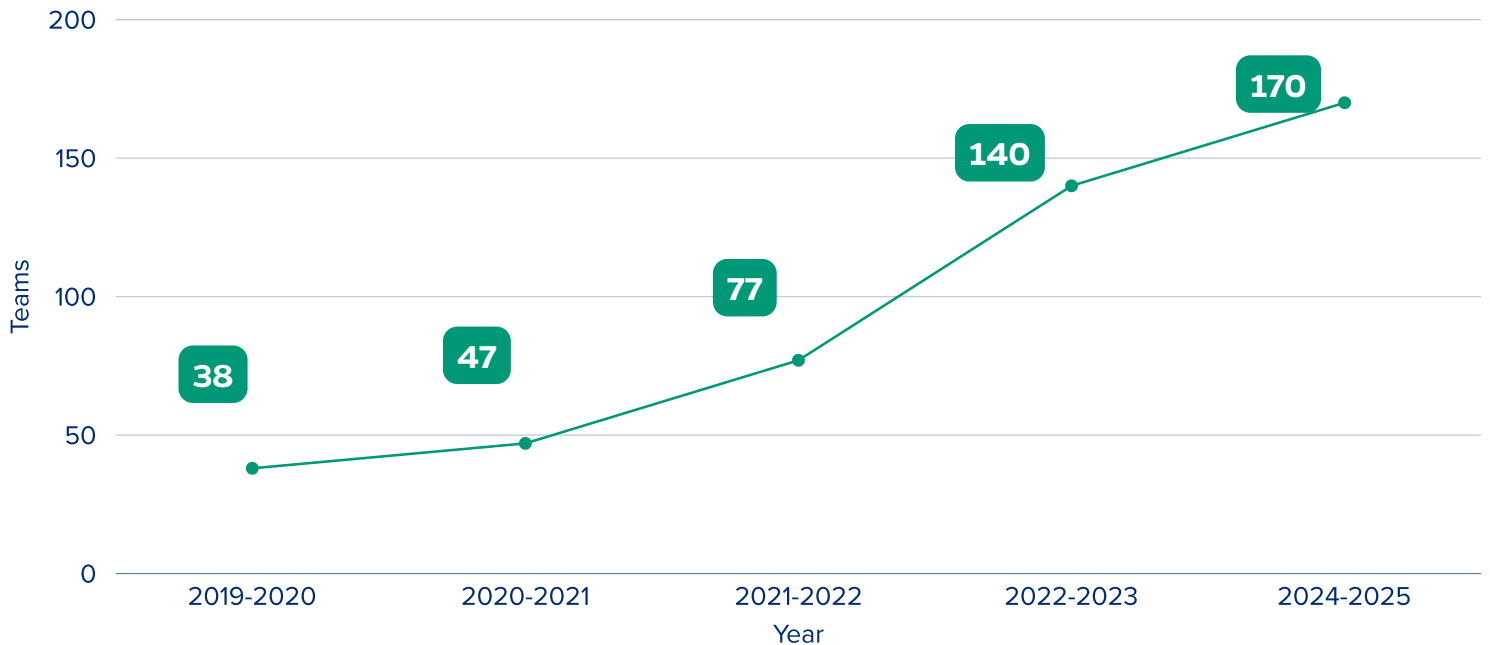
Page Views	<b>61K</b>
Unique Users	<b>15.8K</b>



**THE TEAM UTILIZED THEIR PERSONAL LINKEDIN ACCOUNTS TO RECEIVE AN ADDITIONAL 168.2K IMPRESSIONS FROM OVER 35K COLLECTIVE FOLLOWERS THIS YEAR**

# FIVE-YEAR RECAP

## UNIQUE TEAMS IN PROGRAMMING



The number of applications went from 50 to over 600 in 5 years

“We started with just an idea and ended with signed contracts. The experience kept us on track, pushed us forward, and connected us with incredible mentors. It was the launchpad that elevated us.”  
-Stone Meng, Higher Grounds





# FIVE-YEAR RECAP CONT'D

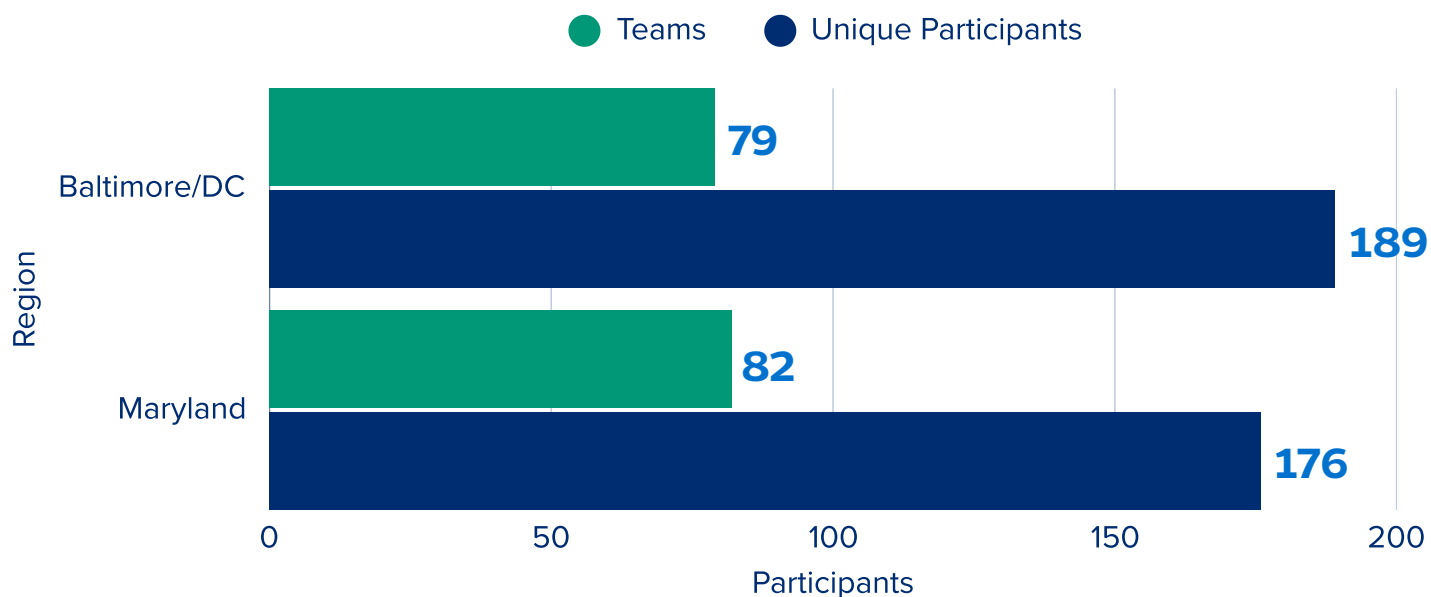


## ‘20-‘25 GRANT MONEY COMMITTED TO STUDENT TEAMS

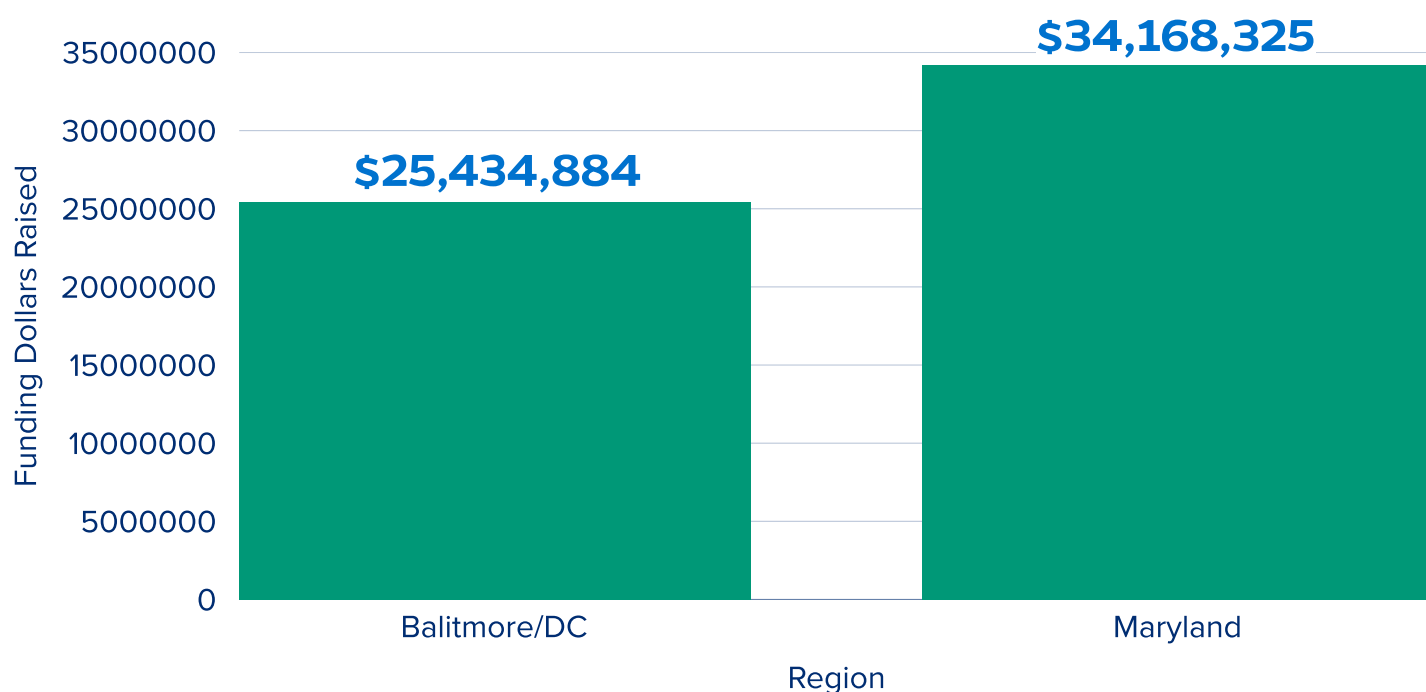


# FIVE-YEAR RECAP CONT'D

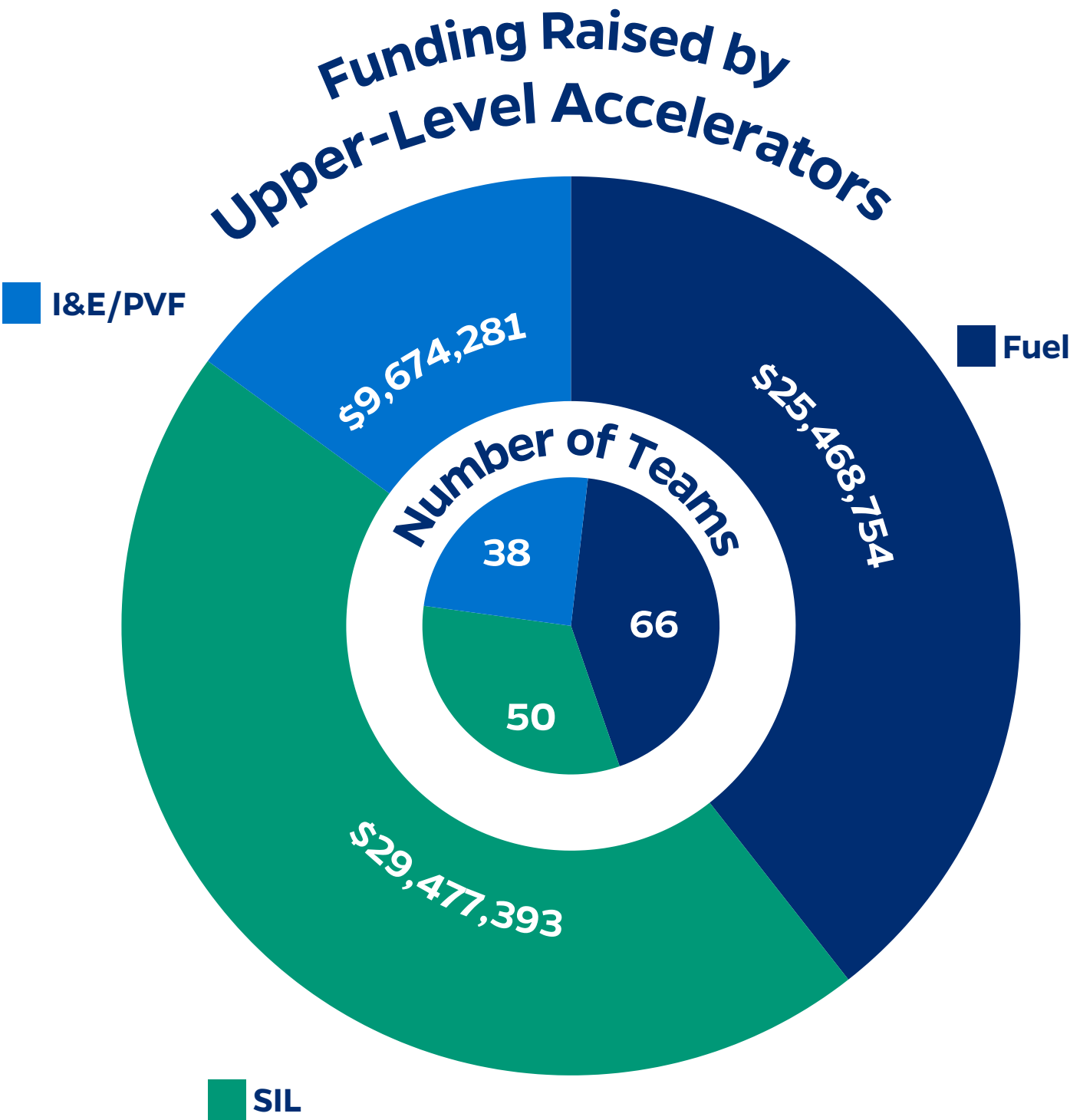
## '20-'25 Upper Level Teams by Region



## '20-'25 Funding Raised by Teams



# FIVE-YEAR RECAP CONT'D



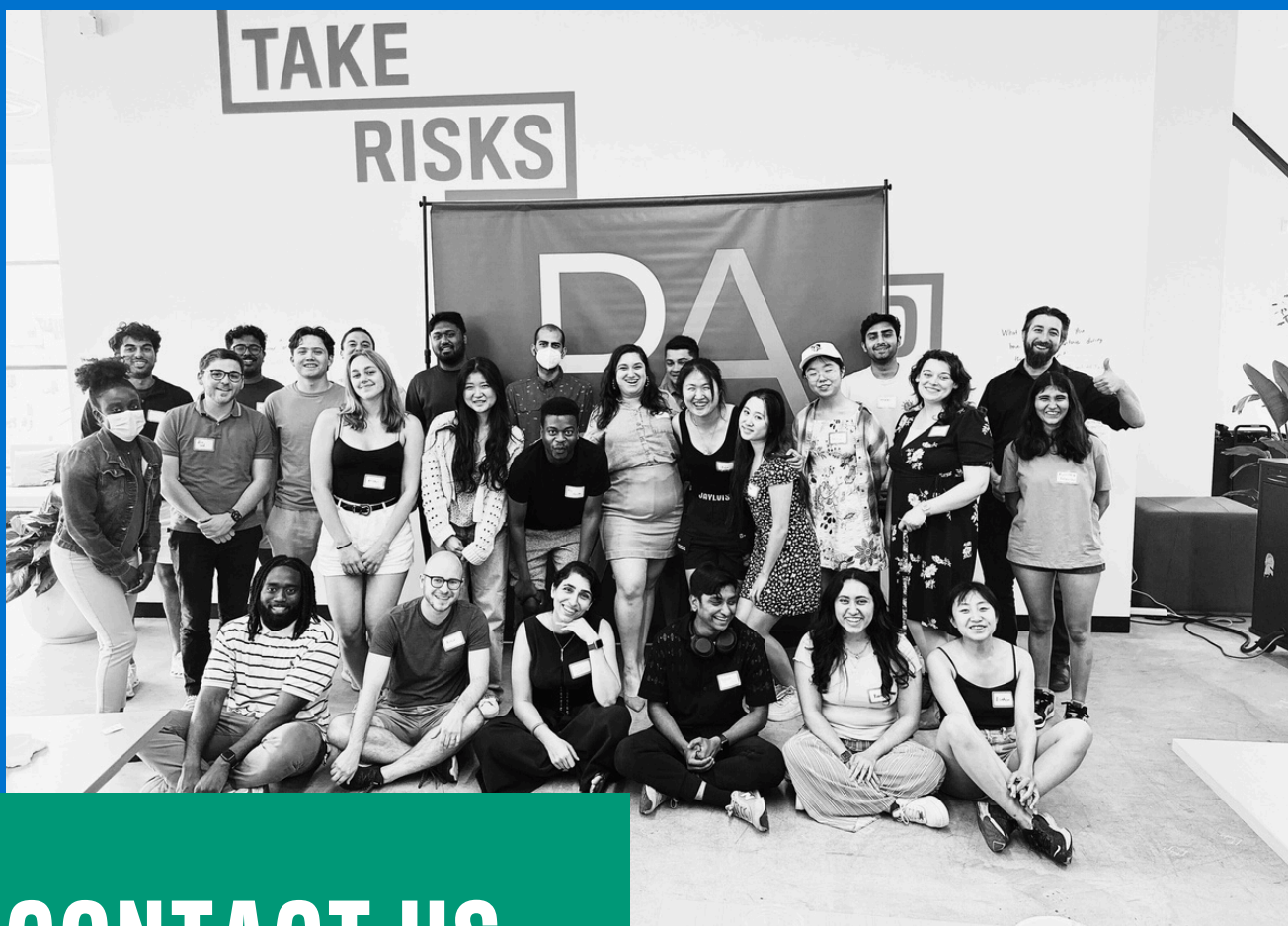


# WITH THANKS AND APPRECIATION TO OUR FY25 DONORS!

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Adedoyin Ajibade Lawal  
Ajith Jacob  
Alexander Harding &  
Cecilia Larocca  
Amanda Stellman  
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